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PRE-GENEVA CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENTS - IV

Chinese Communist line on Indochina settlement: Chinese Communist comment on the Geneva conference has consistently shown a hope of splitting France from the United States on the issue of an Indochina settlement.

The Chinese Communist Party's official People's Daily began this effort on 26 February in an editorial, widely broadcast by Peiping Radio, titled "U.S. Must Stop Intervening in Indochina." The editorial concluded that, "if France is willing to settle the Indochinese question peacefully, it should try to get rid of American intervention and control." On the same day Peiping broadcast an account of "intensified US intervention" in Indochina.

On 1, 3 and 8 March Peiping reported that the United States is "very much against" an Indochina settlement, is prepared to put "dollar pressure" on France to prevent a settlement, and is suffering "real worry."

The People's Daily on 8 March asserted that in recent debates in the French National Assembly "all speakers declared that negotiation was the only way to end the war," but that some French officials who have "linked their destiny" to American policy are both supporting a "European Army" and opposing an Indochina settlement. This editorial went on to declare that the "French masses have come to see . . . that there is no solution along the lines of the French ruling clique continuing its former diplomatic policy of following the United States; they are with ever-increasing insistence demanding a new diplomatic policy, an independent French policy in international affairs"

The same editorial introduced the concept of Indochinese independence from France, noting the "right of the people of Indochina to independence and freedom" and asserting that all participants in the Geneva conference should help to "ensure peace and the right to independence to the people of Indochina." Peiping has not yet developed this theme.

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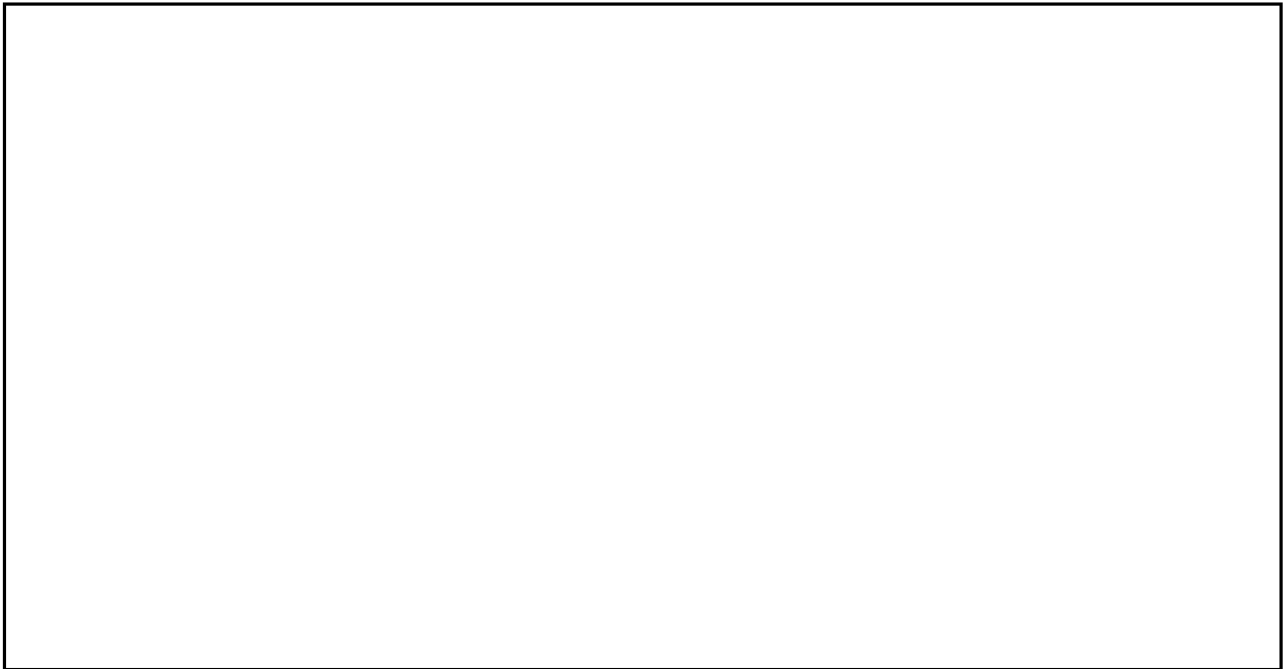
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French Assembly implies Geneva talks must end Indochina war: The American embassy in Paris believes that the recent debate on Indochina in the French National Assembly made it quite clear that the task of countering pressure for direct negotiations with the Viet Minh will be "almost insurmountable" if the Geneva conference fails to "produce tangible results" in Indochina. Immediate negotiations were proposed by Pierre Mendes-France, but failed of acceptance largely because the government promised every effort at Geneva to bring about a settlement.

The resolution voted by the Assembly states that France will be relieved of its obligations to the Associated States if they repudiate any provision of the constitution relative to the French Union. The embassy fears this statement will foredoom the current negotiations with Vietnam.

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Bohlen suggests Chinese Communists may not withdraw from Korea: Pravda on 9 March charged that "it is not at all certain" that two American divisions will actually be withdrawn from Korea. The maintenance of the forces of other countries under the UN Command also proves that the "United States does not intend to end the occupation of South Korea."

Ambassador Bohlen comments that this article may be the beginning of a Soviet propaganda campaign designed to show that, in view of the continued occupation of South Korea by UN Command forces and the build-up of ROK forces, a Chinese Communist withdrawal from North Korea should not be expected.

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Communist proposals at the truce talks and at the United Nations, however, as well as public statements, have insisted on the withdrawal of foreign troops as the first order of business at the Korean political conference. It is probable that Communist representatives at the Geneva conference will propose a mutual withdrawal of foreign forces but will couple this with conditions unacceptable to the West. This Pravda statement appears to be an attempt to place the blame in advance on the West if the Communist proposal is unacceptable.

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